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Fall 2015

## ENGL 2152

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*University of New Orleans*

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## ENGL 2152-1

Inge Fink

### SYLLABUS FALL 2015

Class: MWF 9-9:50

Classroom: LA 390

Office Hours: MWF 11-12

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Text: Markel, Technical Communication, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (ISBN: 12:978-0-312-55532-0) All page numbers in parentheses refer to Markel. Do not buy the book yet—come to class first!

All of the readings have to be completed by the beginning of class on which they appear on the syllabus.

Date	What will happen in class	Deadlines
Aug W19	Class Goals and Procedures	
F 21	Academic and Technical Writing	Markel, Chap. 1: Introduction to Technical Communication (pp. 2-38)
M 24	<b>PROJECT I: <u>BUSINESS COMMUNICATION</u></b>	Markel, Chap 14: “Writing Letters, Memos, and E- mails”
W 26	Technical Editing: Writing Coherent Documents (Morehull Exercise)	Markel, Chap. 9 pp.198ff
F 28	Technical Editing: Commas and Punctuation	
M 31	“Nastygram” Case Analysis (“United Tools”)	Case analysis “United Tools” (print and bring to class)
Sept. W 2	<b>PROJECT 2: <u>WRITING INSTRUCTIONS</u></b> Set-up groups for workshops	Markel, Chap 20 (p.588ff.): “Writing Instructions”
F 4	Group WS	
M 7	<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>	
W 9	Group WS	<b>Response to “Nastygram” due</b>
F 11	Group WS	<b>Case Analysis (“United Tools”) due</b>
M 14	Writing With Sources WS 1	
W 16	Utility Testing	<b>Set of Instructions due</b>

	Writing With Sources WS 2	(bring one copy for each member of the group plus one for the teacher)
F 18	Writing With Sources WS 3	
M 21	<b>PROJECT 3: <u>TECHNICAL REPORT</u> / <u>RECOMMENDATION REPORT</u> (RESEARCH PROJECT)</b> WS brainstorming possible topics (Research WS 1)	Markel, Chap. 19 (p. 500-507): "Writing Recommendation Reports"
W 23	Doing basic research (Research WS 2)	<b>Utility Report due</b>
F 25	Writing Proposals	Markel, Chap. 16: "Writing Proposals"
M 28	Conducting basic research through reference works (Library Tour)	<b>Class will meet in the lobby of the UNO library at class time!</b>
W 30	Accessing and using general online databases	
Oct. F 2	Accessing and using professional online databases	<b>Library Exercise due</b>
M 5	Painless Bibliography	
W 7	Writing Summaries Annotated Bibliography	
F 9	Technical Editing	
M 12	Note Cards	<b>Annotated Bibliography (3 titles) due</b>
W 14	Note Cards WS ctd. Drop date!	
F 16	Mid-Semester Break	
M 19	Integrating Sources	<b>Research Proposal due</b>
W 21	Writing Recommendation Reports	Markel, Chap. 19 p. 507ff: "Writing Recommendation Reports"
F 23	WS producing an outline for your paper	<b><u>Bring 15-20 note cards to class</u></b> , done in the format you learned in the course.
M 26	Writing a Prospectus Make an appointment with the instructor to see her about your prospectus!	
W 28	From Note Cards to Drafting	Prospectus Due Make an appointment with the instructor!

F 30	Illustrations	Tebeaux, Chap 6: “Designing Illustrations” (posted)
Nov. M 2	Giving Oral Reports; Designing PowerPoint slides	Markel, Chap. 21: “Making Oral Presentations”
W 4	Drafting the Paper/Integrating Sources	
F 6	Drafting the Paper/Integrating Sources	
M 9	Technical Editing	
W 11	Presentations of your Research Project	
F 13	Presentations ctd.	
M 16	Presentations ctd.	
W 18	Presentations ctd.	
F 20	Presentations ctd.	
M 23	Presentations ctd.	
W 25	Research Company Information	<b>Technical Report due</b>
F 27	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	
M 30	<b>PROJECT 4: <u>JOB APPLICATION</u></b> Writing résumés	Markel, Chap. 15: “Preparing Job Application Materials” (Resumes: 389-415)
Dec. W 2	Writing job application letters	Markel, Chap 15: Job-Application Letters (415-424)
F 4	Preparation for Final Exam	<b>Job Application Materials Due: Resume, Letter, Company Information</b>
W 9	Final Exam, 7:30-9:30 am	

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course is designed to teach students to write in a professional setting, which is rather different from the academic environment. While the principles of good writing still apply—clarity in language and organization—documents in the corporate world often have multiple audiences, follow templates, and are written collaboratively. The course will expose students to a variety of documents and strategies commonly used in the professions, allowing students to work on topics particular to their chosen fields whenever possible. Students will produce job-related correspondence and job-application materials, write a set of instructions done as a group project, write a recommendation report on a topic in their field, and give one oral presentation accompanied by PowerPoint slides.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to produce various technical documents (letters, memos, sets of instructions, informational and analytical reports, utility reports, recommendation reports, PowerPoint presentations). They will know how to do formal research (both through print and electronic sources) and how to give oral reports. They will have learned to present themselves to a prospective employer; they will know how to write instructions; they will know how to write collaboratively; they will have studied and analyzed technical documents in their field. They will also be better editors of their own writing, both grammatically and stylistically.

Besides becoming better writers, students will also learn how to be professionals in this class, which includes being on time for class and appointments, turning in professional-looking documents on time, and taking responsibility for their actions (or lack thereof).

## **PROJECTS / WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

You will complete four projects in the course of the semester. Each project involves one or several written documents; one will require an oral report.

### **PROJECT 1: BUSINESS COMMUNICATION**

This project will ask you to analyze two (tricky) business situations and produce a document to resolve the issue. You will be required to think analytically and gauge your audience very carefully.

### **PROJECT 2: INSTRUCTIONS AND UTILITY TESTING (GROUP PROJECT)**

As a group, you will write and design a **SET OF INSTRUCTIONS** on how to perform a process that most people in the class will find useful. Once the sets of instructions are finished, each member of the class will take one set home, try out the process, and write an informal **EVALUATION/UTILITY REPORT** of how effectively your manual described the process. Your grade for this assignment will be based (in equal parts) on the professional look and the clarity of your manual, the evaluation you got from the "consumers," and the quality of your evaluation report.

### **PROJECT 3: RECOMMENDATION REPORT**

This is the **research assignment** of the semester. You will select an appropriate topic in your major field, carry out the required research, and produce a report that follows the guidelines for a technical report. The paper will be 5-10 double-spaced pages long, not counting front or back matter. It will use a minimum of 6 sources, some of which must be professional. If you decide to work with a partner, the length and number of sources will double.

In the process of writing your formal report, you will turn in the following **scaffolding assignments** (see syllabus for deadlines). **You cannot skip any of these assignments.** I will not accept any of these assignments unless the previous assignment has been turned in at least one class earlier (grades will drop for all late assignments), which means you cannot turn in more than one at a time, and they have to be in sequence. **You will receive an F for “scaffolding assignments” if any ONE of these assignments is missing. I will not accept your Recommendation Report if any TWO of these assignments are missing, which means you will get an F on the paper as well.** Each of the documents will receive a separate grade; the grade for your overall performance will be the average of the different documents.

- **LIBRARY EXERCISE**
- **WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY (10 TITLES)**
- **RESEARCH PROPOSAL**
- **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (3 TITLES)**
- **15-20 NOTE CARDS**
- **PROSPECTUS**

You will present your report to the class in a short 12-minute **ORAL PRESENTATION**, along with PowerPoint slides, for which you will receive a grade from your entire audience.

### **PROJECT 4: JOB-APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

It is customary in this course that students prepare a **RESUMÉ** and a **LETTER OF APPLICATION** for a job or an internship with a company. You will be writing to a real company for a real job or internship; you don't have to mail the letter if you don't want to.

### **READING QUESTIONS (EXTRA-CREDIT)**

Our textbook gives detailed instructions on how to produce a particular document; the classroom is a workshop where we will write these documents. **I will not lecture on the readings in the textbook.** In order to understand what is going on and to keep up with the class, it is mandatory that you complete reading assignment for every class.

Because it is difficult to read and retain technical information, I will post a set of reading questions for each reading. **Answering the reading questions is optional** (**doing the readings is not**). However, those students who take the trouble to answer reading questions will be rewarded: an A for each set of RQs will equal 4 points in your bonus account. At the end of the semester, you may trade in these points for privileges: make up for a class you missed above the FIVE that are allowed (10 points); get a one-day extension on a deadline (15 points). Whatever

bonus points you do not use up in the above manner will count as bonus points toward your final exam.

If you choose to take advantage of this offer (and you'd be a darn fool if you didn't), the answers to your RQs must be typed and turned in by the end of the class period for which the reading appears on the syllabus. RQs that come in late (if only by five minutes) will count as zero.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Because deadlines are a crucial issue in the business world, you have to learn to meet them. **All assignments are due by the end of class on the day specified on the syllabus.** I will accept assignments in class only (unless by special permission). If you cannot come to class, you can send in assignments by email (as attachments formatted in Word) with an explanation as to why you are sending rather than turning this in; they will count as half a day late if they arrive on the due day but after class. The grade will drop one letter (10 points) for each *calendar* day a paper is handed in late.

All assignments have to be **typed** and follow given formal guidelines.

### **GRADES**

PROJECT 1 (Response to "Nastygram", United Tools Case Analysis)		10%
PROJECT 2 (Set of Instructions, Utility Report)		15%
PROJECT 3	Scaffolding Assignments	20%
	Oral Presentation	10%
	Recommendation Report	20%
PROJECT 4 (résumé, job-application letter)		10%
FINAL EXAM		15%

You can do the math: A+ (100), A (95), B (85), C (75), D (65), F (55) ... in-between grades will have scores in between the ones listed above. To calculate your final grade, I will multiply each score with the percentage stated in the chart above, add up the numbers, and divide the final score by 100.

Note that an F is a 55. If you fail to submit an assignment, you will receive a zero (not an F). **If you earn a zero on any of the scaffolding assignments for Project 3, you will fail the entire project.**

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE—SICK / EMERGENCY LEAVE**

Because absenteeism has ruined many a promising career, UNO has a very strict attendance policy to train you to be a responsible professional. You will be reported to your dean if you miss more than the allowed number of classes. **You may miss FIVE classes in the course of the semester (for whatever reason); if you miss more than FIVE (for whatever reason), your final**

**grade will drop a letter grade (10 points) for each additional class.** Think of these classes as **sick leave** or **emergency leave**—do not waste them on trivial matters! I do not need to see any written documentation for your absences (but I want you to email me and explain why you missed class the day of your absence)—you have FIVE, and that’s it. As stated above, you have the option to “work overtime” by doing the Reading Questions and thus earn amnesty for one or two extra classes you might have to miss.

Since punctuality is a vital characteristic of a professional, I expect you to be on time for every class. I will call the roll at the beginning of each class; **if you are not in class when I call your name, the class will count as one of your absences.**

**CONFERENCES:** I will keep the office hours stated on the syllabus. During these times, feel free to come in and discuss your work with me. This is also a good time to call me on the phone. If you cannot make my office hours, I will be glad to give you a special appointment. Since I am a very busy person, these appointments are binding: **if you fail to keep one without calling ahead to cancel it, you will lose your privilege to get such appointments.** You will still be able to come see me, but it will have to be during my scheduled office hours.

**PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty—such as cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty—will not be tolerated. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information, available online at <http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu>.

Learning how to use outside sources in academic writing is a large part of this class, so you do not have to be afraid of “plagiarizing by mistake.” This course will teach you how to do it properly!

**CLASSROOM CONDUCT:** Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow students with respect. Any actions that purposefully and maliciously distract the class will not be allowed. Respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. Chances are you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. However, regardless of the topic of discussion or the casual nature of the exchange, courteous behavior and responses are expected at all times.

**ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services (UC 260) as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.ods.uno.edu>.